

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT
31 October 1984

MCWETHY: The U.S. and the Soviet Union are major players on the Indian subcontinent, with each in a position to lose ground in the wake of today's assassination. Since the early 1970s, Indira Gandhi had been moving India toward a closer relationship with the Soviet Union, buying weapons from the Russians, refusing to criticize the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The U.S., meanwhile, has been arming India's neighbor and bitter enemy, Pakistan. In the last two months, intelligence reports have indicated growing tension on the Indo-Pakistan border. Despite such tensions, today from Pakistan came words of praise for India's fallen leader. ZIA-UI-HAQ (president of Pakistan): She was a leader of tremendous ability who served her people in the best of the possible manners.

MCWETHY: Words of praise from Pakistan, but in some quarters, Indian officials are hinting that Pakistan may have been indirectly involved in the Gandhi assassination by long-term support of Sikh terrorists. It's a charge that Pakistan flatly denies, the kind of inflammatory accusation that U.S. officials fear could make tension in the region much worse. John McWethy, ABC News, the State Department. <